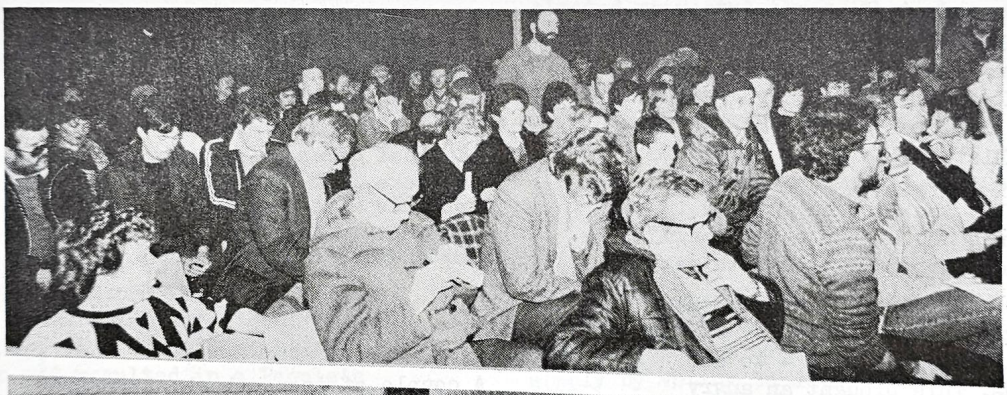
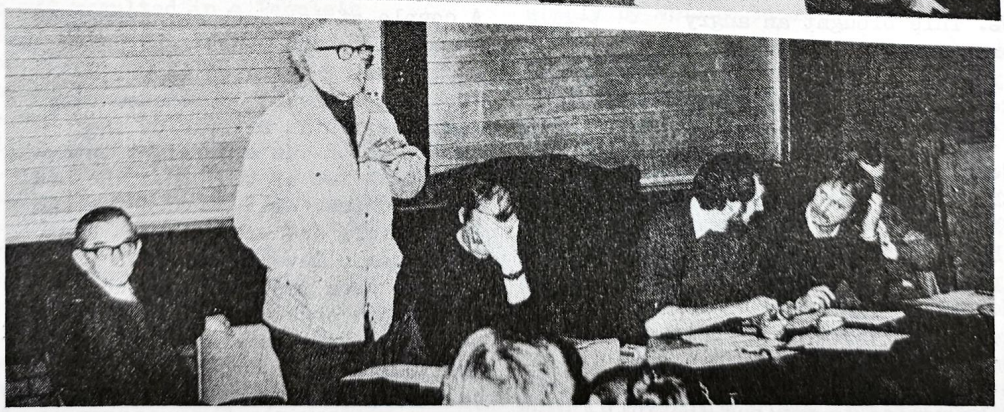
resource

UPPER SPRINGFIELD RESOURCE CENTRE Whiterock Road, Belfast Number 30 Price 20p

WHITEROCK: THE PEOPLE FIGHT BACK





February 1985

RESOURCE CENTRE

The 284 appeals being handed in at Murray House.

Shortly before Christmas, the Resource Centre co-ordinated a mass appeal against the Housing Executive's decision not to pay the maximum Disturbance Grant of £70 to people in Ballymurphy and New Barnsley who were so grossly inconvenienced by the refurbishing schemes carried out on both estates.

After much delay, the Executive informed people that only £15 per house was being paid - to all houses. This brought an angry response from both estates, with many people calling to the Resource Centre asking if anything could be done to counter the decision.

The Centre leafleted both estates; and the result was that 284 appeals were hand-delivered at Murray House. This has created much confusion in high places. It would appear that the Housing Executive did not expect people to be informed of their entitlements, and had therefore not budgeted for the £50,000 or so that would be needed to pay out the full grant to each household affected. The dispute continues ...

* * *

This year's Stage 1 Course in Youth & Community Work has got off to a good start with 24 students taking part. The course is again the result of local demands. It will run for 16 weeks, two hours a week, and will conclude with a week-end at Hampton, the residential centre of the N.I. Association of Youth Clubs.

* * *

A couple of issues back, RESOURCE reported on the money-lending racket being operated in Whiterock. As a result SCOPE community magazine ran an article on the issue, which was a straight interview with two of the women who had been victims. Will Glendinning saw the article and wrote to the Dept. of Economic Development; and it has now been reported that Rhodes Boyson has ordered an investigation into the moneylenders operating in West Belfast. So, there may well be some good news in the pipeline for many people in this area.

* * *

Fighting Local Issues.

WHITEROCK: THE PEOPLE FIGHT BACK

At the public meeting held at the Ballymurphy Tenants' Association on January 21st, representatives of some 40 community organisations, local people, trade union representatives, political parties and all but two of West Belfast's elected representatives sat down together to discuss the future of Whiterock Leisure Centre in the face of the City Council's decision to close the facility unless the Dept. of Education takes it over.

The meeting was called by local community groups so that the people could organise for the fight against the bigots at City Hall, and so that elected representatives could be called to accountability.

The meeting began with a brief introduction, during which it was pointed out that the present situation arose as a result of the City Council's decision not to invite the Sinn Fein MP for the area, Gerry Adams, to its official opening. This aroused much local anger and resulted in a People's Opening, sponsored by 14 community groups, where Mr Adams unveiled a plaque in Irish, and at which a tricolour was raised above the building. Those who sponsored that opening accused the Council of attacking the very basis of democracy, arguing that, in a democratic society, the people's right to choose whomsoever they wished must be absolute. Since then, the Unionists had maintained a constant barrage of attacks on the Leisure Centre, using the presence of the flag as an excuse, while in reality they were still smarting from the humiliation visited upon them by the People's Opening, and the fact that most local community groups boycotted the Council's official opening.

The speaker went on to point out how deeply this bigotry, and support for it, penetrates into our community. When the ad hoc committee went about organising the meeting, they soon found all public buildings in the area closed to them. The only building they could get for a simple meeting to discuss an issue of great importance to the community was the only building controlled by the people - the BTA centre. He further pointed out, on the question of accountability of elected representatives, that when Paddy Devlin, councillor and trade union representative was invited, his response was that he couldn't make it, and even if he could, he wouldn't..!

The legal position was then outlined by John McGetterick, legal advisor to the ad hoc committee, who said that the Council had a statutory obligation to provide 'adequate' leisure facilities; but they also had the power to close the centre, simply by voting to do so.

This led to much discussion from the floor, including support for the continued flying of the flag, and an endorsement of the People's Opening. A committee was then elected to carry on the work of the ad hoc committee, and to demand that the centre be handed over to a local management group. Afterwards a spokesperson for the newly elected committee said:

'We waited 20 years for this centre. When it eventually came, we discovered that the planned facilities had been drastically reduced. Now we're faced with a position where the centre is under constant attack from the City Council, generating

(Continued next page)

HOLIDAYS

JOHN BROWN

The Upper Springfield Children's Holiday Scheme in 1984 organised holidays in the Isle of Man, Omeath and Omagh. In these trips a total of 90 children and 42 helpers were involved. We would like to express our appreciation to all the helpers, especially those who were house-mothers in the Isle of Man and Omeath

The group also held a club for 5 - 10 year-olds three times a week in Whiterock Community Centre from January to October. However, due to pressure on the young people and lack of finance, it was decided to close the evening clubs. It is hoped that in 1985 we may be able to restart the evening sessions.

In the last issue of Resource we also mentioned the concert in which 200 children from local schools and youth clubs took part, and the presentation of a 'Young Helper Of The Year' award.

Last year's fund-raising efforts raised £5,891.79 from parents' contributions, collections, sponsored events, discos and the concert. The holidays themselves ate up £5,835.29, which leaves us a little bit left over for next season. We are very grateful to the public for their continuing support.

In 1985 we hope to provide as many holidays as last year. While perhaps not being as adventurous as last year (no Isle of Man in '85), we will have Omagh and Rostrevor or Omeath where we have had enjoyable times before.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank all those who helped us in the past year.

leisure centre farce

(Continued from previous page)

uncertainty in relation to both the facility and jobs.We feel that this is an intolerable situation, and that the only solution is that control of the centre be handed over to a management committee accountable to local people.'

Since then, a letter has been sent to Nicholas Scott, Minister for Education, making exactly that demand. The committee await his reply.

moyard

The Moyard Housing Action Committee is appealing to all those who are being re-housed out of the maisonettes not to damage the maisonette when they are leaving. There has already been one case where the copper cylinder was taken out of an upstairs flat so that the water poured in on the people downstairs who had not yet been re-housed.

Desi Johnston, Chairperson of the Housing Action Committee said 'Not alone are people who do this creating hardship for their neighbours who are still in the maisonettes, but they're also putting themselves in a position where the Housing Executive is refusing to hand over the keys of their new home.'

One More Murder For The Crown

The funeral of 15 year-old Paul Kelly, murdered by British forces, makes its way through the City Cemetery.

The murder of 15 year-old Paul Kelly by the UDR brings to seven the number of joyriders murdered by British forces in West Belfast since 1979. In this latest case, the car carrying the five young joyriders had crashed into a ditch within yards of the two army land-rovers involved when the soldiers riddled it with bullets. One of the youngsters,who managed to get out of the car, was shot as he ran away from the scene. The action of the UDR was again of course nicely excused by direct-ruler Hurd and the establishment media, who have all come around to the idea that joyriding in West Belfast is a capital offence.

Ironically, on the same day, the International Year of Youth was being celebrated at the other end of Kennedy Way, where Paul Kelly was murdered, with stands being presented by members of the very same military forces that had murdered him! And in the ensuing row, the youth service,and all the other organisations that have the interests of young people so much in their hearts, were once more conspicuous by their silence. As was the church, but we expect that.

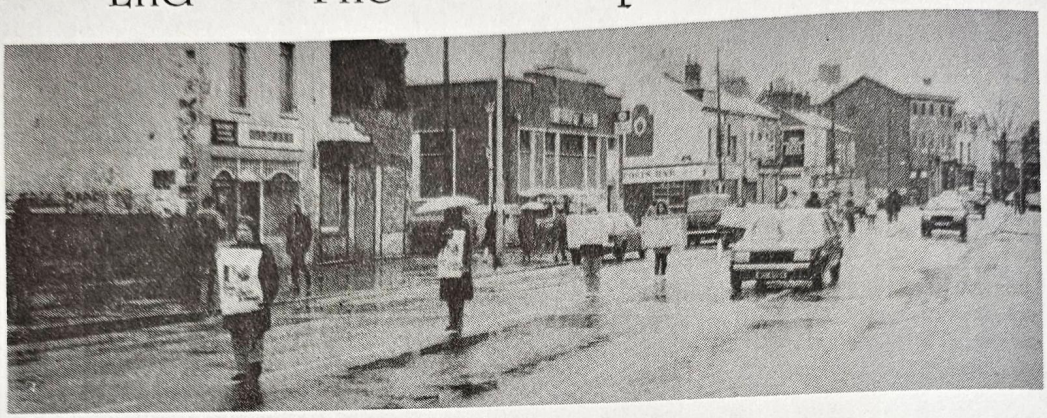
Once again we have seen the British response to a social problem, a response that is confined to West Belfast, and would raise an outrage in Britain if it were to occur in Birmingham or London. Once again we have had confirmed for us that our biggest social problem is the presence of licensed murderers on our streets.

We would again appeal to the joyriders to wise up and realise that they are dealing with trigger-happy killers for whom there is always open season in Nationalist areas.

STOP PRESS ... STOP PRESS ... STOP PRESS

At going to press, we have just heard that British forces - the RUC this time - have murdered another teenager, Gerard Logue from Beechmount, aged 19. Gerard was joyriding...

End The Strip - searching !



White-line picket on Falls Road against strip-searches.

The strip-searching in Armagh of the women POWs is not simply a crime against the prisoners; it is a crime against all women. It is a policy designed by the men responsible for the women's incarceration, a policy that is carried out by women against women. It is on par with the barbarism practised by the Ku Klux Klan in the southern States when they forced black men to rape black women as an integral part of their racist actions.

Admittedly, there is probably less need of force in the Armagh situation, as the female screws are quite willing to participate in this self-degrading behaviour to satisfy their hatred of women who are their political opponents. They are, however, none the less degraded as women, and as human beings.

So too are our women; but the degradation in their case is brutally inflicted. It is a degradation for which there is absolutely no moral, or any other, justification, and one that must be opposed by all who believe in the dignity of human beings.

At present, the campaign against the strip-searching is gaining ground. Sections of the trade union movement have already given their support; and this is being built upon. Committees are being organised throughout the whole of Ireland. The committees are to organise pickets, write letters, put pressure on those in power, and give moral support to the POWs.

Already, meetings held have shown that there is massive revulsion at this British tactic of humiliating our women. The British version (that this is a 'security' measure) finds little credence in any corner; and simply shows again that we are dealing with liars, with, this time, a little perversion thrown in for good measure.

We reproduce here the words of one woman who has undergone this ordeal:

'... I thought of all the women, striving everywhere to achieve their freedom. Aye, I thought of a lot of things. Anything to block out what was happening to me. I was stripped naked to confront me with their control, to enforce on me my own vulnerability, to degrade me. But they weren't going to succeed. I saw my nakedness as an indictment against them. They thought my womanhood would serve to help defeat me. They didn't understand that the strength of ideals cannot be stripped from one's mind. As I felt a hand slowly moving down the calf of my leg, my flesh crawled. They weren't content to jibe at my naked state; they had to 'search' me. A skin-search, aye, it sounds rid-

(continued page 7)

(continued from page 6)

iculous but it's true. I was ordered to turn around, and I managed to totally ignore that command, and the following ones. They could strip me, but no way was I going to assist them. They were forced to move behind me. I steeled myself again as they searched my hair. Eventually they could draw out the search no longer. They told me to re-enter the cubicle and dress quickly. I remained there, silently staring at each one of them in turn...'

No human being should allow this to continue. We urge everyone who has the faculty to think and move to support all activities against the strip-searching in Armagh.

LEISURE CENTRE

WHITEROCK
Whiterock Road —Tel. 233239

Day and Date		*Time*
SATURDAY	Disco Dancing Class	11.00am-1.00pm
SUNDAY	Indoor Bowling	4.00pm-6.00pm
MONDAY	Ladies Activities	10.00am-12 noon
	After School Activities	4.00pm-6.00pm
	Karate	6.30pm-8.00pm
	Soccer Skills	8.00pm-9.00pm
TUESDAY	Unemployed Activities	2.00pm-4.00pm
	Trampolining	4.30pm-6.00pm
	Ladies Activities	7.00pm-8.00pm
WEDNESDAY	Ladies Activities	10.00am-12 noon
	After School Activities	4.00pm-6.00pm
	Karate	6.30pm-8.00pm
THURSDAY	Unemployed Activities	2.00pm-4.00pm
	After School Activities	4.00pm-6.00pm
	Handicapped Swimming	6.00pm-7.00pm
	Ladies Keep-Fit	7.00pm-8.00pm
FRIDAY	Ladies Activities	10.00pm-12 noon
	Trampolining	4.30pm-6.30pm
	Soccer Skills	7.00pm-8.00pm
	Indoor Bowls	8.00pm-10.00pm

EXPRESSION

Congratulations to the Upper Springfield Girls' Life Group who did such a good job on BBC last week. The programme, about young single mothers and general attitudes to contraception, was very well done by the young women, whose contributions were also quite interesting. Also interesting, and enlightening, were the males' contributions, which were mainly of the medieval stream of thought.

It is heartening to see young people talk openly about sexuality and relationships. It is a sign of perhaps a healthier future when the guilt-feelings that dogged many of their parents' generation, and filled the country's asylums, may be no more than relics in the museums of the past.

NEW TIES

In recent months there has been great movement back and forward across the city between a group of women from the Upper Springfield and a group of women from Ballybeen.

The women first met during an Education Day at the People's College, when various women's groups from all over the North gathered to discuss issues relevant to women.

Since then a number of Education Days for women have been held throughout the town, the last of which was held at Whiterock Community Centre. Following this there have been several informal gatherings of the Ballybeen and Upper Springfield women, and both groups hope to continue meeting.

THE GRAN

The opening of Whiterock Library has had an extraordinary effect on the readership levels of the area. Within the first three days, the membership of the branch doubled from 1,000 to 2,000, a response far beyond anyone's expectations. The result was that staff from other branches had to be drafted in to keep the show on the road.

The greatest response seems to have come from the young people, as can be seen from our photographs. They have flocked in to avail of the new facility, and keep the library staff on their toes.

For a long time, it was said that Whiterock library (when it operated from the Resource Centre) was not used as well as other branches in the city. Of course it wasn't - with a stock that had almost fossilised, what can you expect? And a setting that was anything but ideal. But, give the people a proper setting and a decent stock of books, and the result is a 100%

Some of the young people that have swelled the library's membership from 1,000 to 2,000.

Some more of the same young people ...

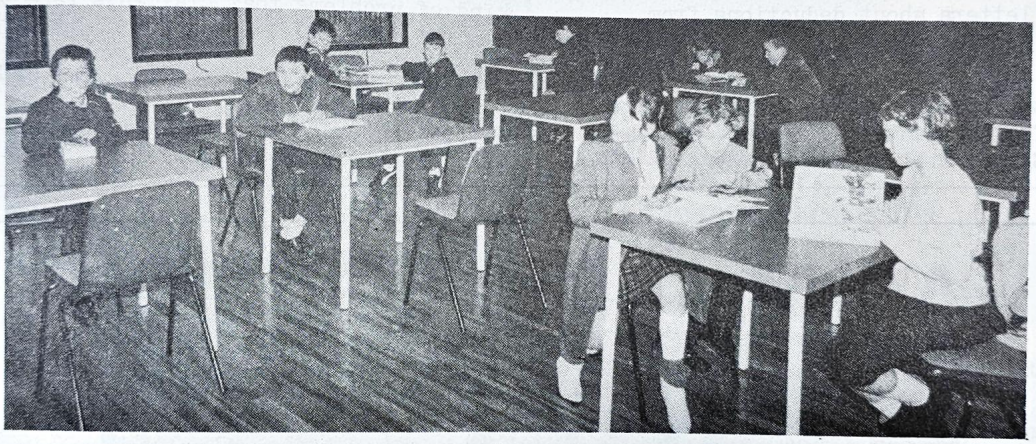
ID OPENING

increase in membership.

The new facility is of course long overdue, approximately 30 years overdue. It is a reflection of the amount of consideration that went into planning the whole Upper Springfield area that such a facility didn't exist from the beginning. However, better late, I suppose, than never.

It's also good to see the old faces in the new setting. Molly, Ann and Geraldine, who did such a great job through hot and cold and blizzards at the Resource Centre. It just wouldn't be the same without the fine healthy lungs of our intrepid battlers, always set to take on all challengers. I hear that the only worry they've left behind at the Resource Centre is how, oh how, will they cope without the tunnel to the famous establishment run by Bridie, Margaret and Ann-Marie at the top of the Rock...

BOOKWORM THE SECOND.



And some more ...

And ...

BENEFIT CLASSES

Do you have Social Security forms to fill in? Do you have Single Payment claims to make? Do you have a home visit to face? Do you have to contend with letters about deductions from your benefit?

Do-it-yourself classes for Supplementary Benefit claimants are to held in Conway Street Mill, beginning Monday 18th February. Classes begin at 10.00 a.m. and run till 12.00 noon, and are designed to give Supplementary Benefit claimants the know-how to tackle the kind of problems that claimants face all the time.

PLAYROOMS FOR CHILDREN & TEA - ALL FREE.

Further information from Falls Community Council, Tel: 621410.

A.I.M. DELEGATION

Members of the American Indian Movement in Belfast to express solidarity with the Republican struggle, and to explain the plight of their own people.

NORMALITY, BELFAST

Hustle, bustle goes the crowd
Shuffle, shuffle go their feet
Ding, ding goes the cash register
And cars move up and down the street.

Boom, boom goes the bomb
Bang, bang goes the gun
Shock, scream goes the crowd
In any direction they run.

Cry, cry go the injured
Shock, shock go the public
Shake, shake go the old folk
While children stand and be sick

Weep, weep go the mourners
Silent, silent are the dead
Hush, hush are the crowd
While the death rite is read

Hustle, bustle goes the crowd
Shuffle, shuffle go their feet
Ding, ding goes the cash register
And cars move up and down the street.

BERNADETTE MAGUIRE

'MURDERERS!' WE SAID.

'Murderers!' we said
As they buried him this morning,
Snow sweeping down in bitter breath
From the brooding mountain.

He was a lad of fifteen, aye fifteen,
Fledged freely on youth's wild wings,
Storming high exhilirating crags,
Breaking the barrier of failure -
Legacy of his time at school.

A capital offence to steal a car!
'Joyriding,' they said,
As they gunned him down and left him dead
By the side of the road
Under the cold night stars.

The British answer to a social problem.

'Murderers!' we said
As they buried him this morning.

TEN OUT OF TEN ...!

Ever since the delegation from the North American Indian Movement arrived in Belfast, there have been many stories doing the rounds. But few could match the chief tale to emerge from the day they spent at An Sean-Mhuileann, Conway Street. Some woman, in a display of absolute solidarity with the aims of the delegation (which was to express solidarity with the Republican struggle, and to highlight the plight of the American Indians and counteract the image presented by the morons in Hollywood), brought her young son to the mill. The little boy was in full cowboy kit, complete with two six guns, and was out to shoot some Indians in true John Wayne style. So, the mother brings her son straight up to Amos, the spiritual leader of the group, so the little fellow can pull out his two guns and blast away with all the appropriate noises!

My, oh my, oh my...!

MATERIAL FOR RESOURCE

Resource is a community magazine. It is therefore there for your use, and will publish any material that is not anti-people, racist or sexist.

If you have any poems, stories, news, cartoons, or any other piece of information that you would like to pass on to others, why not send it to RESOURCE at The Upper Springfield Resource Centre, 195 Whiterock Road, Belfast BT12 7FW. Tel: 228928.

OPENING HOURS OF NEW LIBRARY

The opening hours of the new library are:

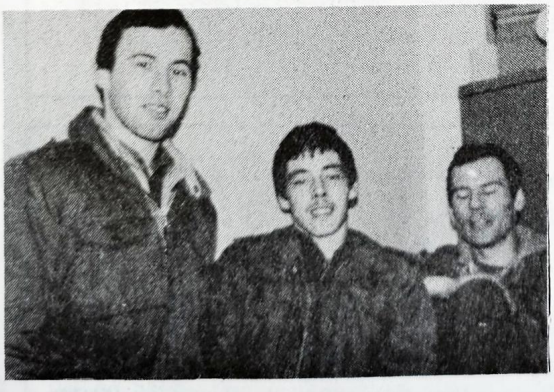
Monday	1.00 pm - 8.00 pm
Tuesday.....	9.00 am - 5.00 pm
Wednesday	9.00 am - 5.00 pm
Thursday	1.00 pm - 8.00 pm
Friday	9.00 pm - 5.00 pm

THE ANNUAL BINGE

Bernie McKeavney, Marie Quiery and Kate Kelly wishing the entire Upper Springfield area a happy New Year.

As the ship lists a little, the camera accidently snaps Jim, Brendan, Eugene, Terry and Micky, all looking very cheerful on the sinking ship.

Mrs McManus from Whitecliffe Drive with Ciaran (an early picture - for contrast note the late picture on opposite page).



Anto Harte, Martin Morris and Padraic Wilson propping one another up.

Eilish, Marie, Kate and Eilish in varying stages of alcoholic stupefaction.

Dan about to sacrifice Ann,
Rowan giving a well-known salute,
Peggy and Martin looking on.

Pat, Sal, Derek and Teresa, all agog at the antics in the corner.

Marie, Caoimhin, Teresa and Bridie in the Shiny Teeth competition, being judged by Pat

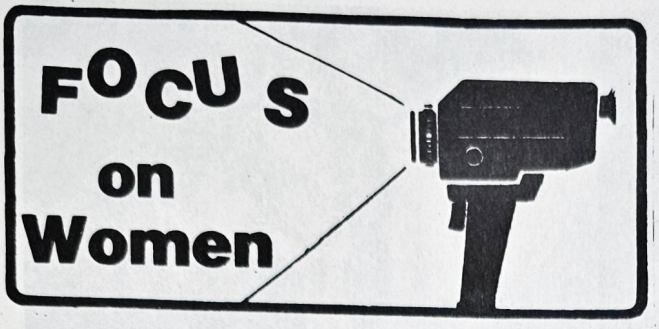
Ciaran (a late picture) being straightened into an upright position by Ann Kerr.

'I'll clam these in yer face!'

For those who were not there, and for those who were but can't remember, we print the above photographic record of the Christmas gathering of all those who were involved in the work of the Resource Centre during 1984.

It was a busy year, and heaven knows the poor cratures needed the wee lift. 'Twas the big lift that did the damage...!

'Whoopee! Same again please!'



RAPE WITHIN MARRIAGE

A man commits rape if:-

(a) he has unlawful (EXTRA-MARITAL) sexual intercourse with a woman who at the time of the intercourse does not consent to it; and

(b) at the time he knows that she does not consent to the intercourse or he is reckless as to whether she consents to it.

The history of the law on rape and other related offences is based on protecting the property of men. The essence of the crime was theft, ie. the daughter of a man or the wife of a man. Once the law had accepted the sine qua non of rape it is only logical to hold that a husband is no more capable of raping his wife than an owner is of stealing his own property.

According to legal precidents from the 1650's,

> The husband cannot be found guilty of rape committed by himself on his lawful wife, for by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given herself in this kind unto her husband which she cannot retract.

In essence this 17th century act is still in existence today; although some ammendments have been made. In 1934 a provision was made to the precident that the husband could not use 'physical violence' to enforce his right; though if he does he is still not guilty of rape. It was ammended again in 1974 when this prohibition applied when a seperation order, or a court order, or an non-cohabiting clause or order, or an injunction order is in effect. He retains the right to rape while a petition for divorce is being processed except if one of the above is in force at the time.

'The mere fact that a wife has left her husband and has presented a petition for divorce does not infer a revocation of the yes consent to sexual intercourse'.

In the course of five years active campaigning Women Against Rape (WAR) came into contact with thousands of women as individuals and in organisations and found that rape in marriage is the most common form of rape.

Two years ago the Northern Ireland Rape Crisis Centre began a campaign to have the law on rape changed particularly the concept of rape within marriage. They are continuing to pressurize for, rape within marriage to be recognised as the crime it is. In the mean time the Rape Crisis Centre are available to offer support and counselling to those who have experienced rape or sexual assault and can be contacted at 249696.

> 'The legality of rape within marriage assumes that a woman's body is not her own. Once this is established in marriage, and thus applied to the majority of women it in effect applies to all women. This assumption that a woman's body is not her own is present in every rape case, undermining natural justice'.

FOCUS on Women

LOCAL WOMEN IN PROFILE.

EILISH NORTON OF GLENALINA CRESCENT.

Eilish was born and reared in Ballymurphy. After leaving school, she worked in one of the stitching factories in Belfast. She then went to Dublin to work and stayed there for three years. After returning home she married and now has three children.

In the mid '70s Eilish became involved in community work. Along with a number of other local women, she helped organise a pre-school playgroup in Ballymurphy Community Centre. This was run on a voluntary basis until 1978 when the N.S.P.C.C. became involved in supporting the facility.

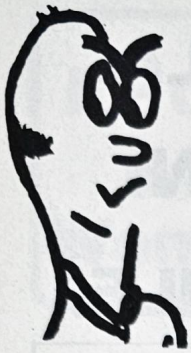
In 1976 the Ballymurphy Community House in Killegar was bought, and holiday schemes were organised, as well as a massive work-camp to renovate the house. The scheme was designed to allow children in the area who would not normally get a holiday to have a break. Eilish helped organise this in Ballymurphy, and remained active on the committee until the property was sold last year.

Meanwhile, she was also working with 'BETWEEN', organising holidays for families in Cork, a scheme operating since the early '70s. The Cork end of BETWEEN has just completed renovations on a house in the city, and Eilish remains an active member of the group.

In 1977 Eilish took part in the Stage 1 Youth & Community Work course developed by the Ballymurphy Detached Project, and found this both interesting and stimulating.

Following this, Eilish became interested in Youth Work; and, as her youngest child has started school, she has been able to devote some of her time to voluntary youth work in the Ballymurphy Youth Club, where she can be found three nights a week.

Over the past few years, Eilish has also become involved in the work of the Resource Centre, helping with the Welfare Benefits Campaign, and more recently, taking part in many of the activities organised through the Women's Project. This has given her an opportunity to meet women from various parts of Belfast, and also delegations from other countries.



Guernin' Barney Sez...

Far be it from me ta make a laughin' matter outta anywan's tough luck; but this is a good wan fer sure. Two weeks ago, the Housin' Executive gives this family from the maisonettes in Moyard a new house in the Murph. But, talk about jumpin' from the fryin' pan inta the fire..! They shifts from their horrible place in Moyard only ta discover that the 'new' house is stinkin', fumigation job, the lot. An' ta cap it all, there's a bloody great rat in the scullery. 'Well, bugger that!' sez the woman, an she borras the neighbour's cat. That night when they're goin' ta bed, they chucks the cat in the scullery wi' the rat, thinkin' that wus the end o' the problem.

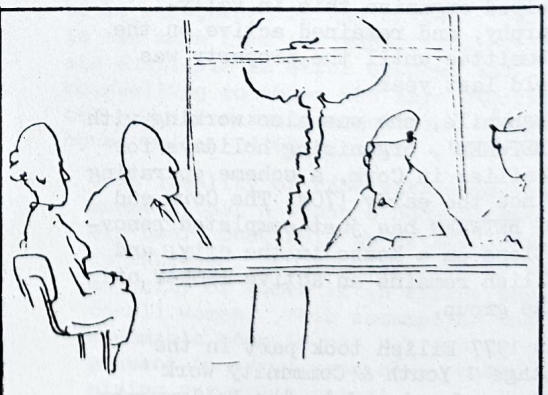
Next mornin' the woman comes downstairs, opens the scullery door, an' out past her shoots this terrified cat wi' a big lump bit out of it! Out the door wi' it like the clappers o' hell, an' she hasn't seen it since. Now, there's rats fer ya!

What about yer mawn the Brit goin' ta take over the Housin' Executive? It's the oul' colonial thing again o' not givin' the natives too much o' the reins, even them what are on yer side. Should be some interestin' developments on the housin' side now. It's bad enough havin' the Brits vettin' all housin' plans an' road plans an' every o'rr sort o' plans; but actilly havin' wan o' them in charge o' the Housin' Executive...! I can jus' see it: fences aroun' the estates, secutity doors inta blocks o' flats, Brits billeted in everywan's house, an' everywan what gives any trouble buried up till their knees in quick-drying concrete. We'll jus' see how many people complains now bout the state o' their houses, or gettin' flats an' the like knocked down ...!

There's only wan thing that strikes meself: this fella wus a servin' Brit here; an' that might make him awful unpopular in certain parts o' this town. Wonder will he have armed escorts o' fifty truck an' a dozen choppers everytime he goes ta check out on wan o' his new schemes...?

Reminds me a bit o' the way the Brits does everythin' here - like the oul bull in the china shop. Ano'rr person might try an' disguise the evil deeds, but not oul' John Bull, no sirree, not oul' John Bull.

Well, with invalidity benefits what they are these days she has to make a bit on the side.



"We don't think a single payment for a fallout shelter is the only means to avoid damage to your health, Mrs Brown. How about a grant for some sandbags?"